

148 of 762 DOCUMENTS

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## Record rain brings flooding, cuts power, halts MetroRail

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Record rainfall Thursday night sent floodwaters into Central Texas homes and over roads, caused power outages for about 10,000 people and interrupted rail service to downtown Austin.

By Friday, Austin officials had closed 38 roads and 14 low-water crossings. Water flooded several homes near Speedway, Avenue F and 45th Street, as well as eight units of the Hyde Park Apartments, where the storms sent about 20 inches of water into the homes of ground-floor residents.

In eight years, property manager Jeanette Chacon said she'd never seen so much overflow from **Waller Creek**.

One of the apartment residents said the water outside her car was knee-deep by midnight Thursday.

"It was crazy," Ashley Carlisle said. "Insane."

The deluge rushing through **Waller Creek** also flooded the pedestrian bridge near Seventh Street and the patio of Easy Tiger Bake Shop & Beer Garden, though several other nearby businesses didn't report any flooding.

About 9,900 Austin Energy customers didn't have power early Friday due to the storms, with most of the outages in East Austin between Interstate 35 and U.S. 183, south of East 51st Street and north of East Cesar Chavez Street.

Power was restored to most of those customers by 7:15 a.m., about the same time that many morning riders of Capital Metro's rail line were being shuttled by bus to downtown Austin.

Overflow from Boggy Creek just south of Rosewood Avenue washed away the rocks supporting a section of rail tracks, forcing Cap Metro to shut down rail service between the station on Martin Luther King Boulevard and the last two stops at Plaza Saltillo on East Fifth Street and near the Austin Convention Center downtown.

MetroRail passengers were shuttled by buses to and from the rail stops, spokesman John Julitz said.

Repair crews replaced the rocks and inspected the tracks Friday, allowing restoration of rail service by late Friday afternoon.

"The flooding last night in that area impacted us very quickly. It was a big impediment to our service," Julitz said. "This has happened before, but it's not all that common."

It was also early Friday that 13 campers from Dallas were rescued from an island in the Colorado River near Webberville in eastern Travis County.

The campers were stranded after rising water washed away the canoes and kayaks they'd used to reach the island Thursday.

STAR Flight assisted with the rescues, and none of the campers reported major injuries.

Not only did the downpour cause its share of problems, but the record rainfall fell chiefly downstream of the region's two main reservoirs, failing to replenish the still drought-stricken Highland Lakes.

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By Friday morning, roughly 5 inches had fallen at Camp Mabry over the previous 24 hours, a record for the date, according to the National Weather Service.

The highest rain totals occurred near Webberville, which received more than 7 inches of rain.

Bob Rose, meteorologist for the Lower Colorado River Authority, forecast a return of dry and summer-like conditions over the weekend, with no rain expected to fall across the Hill Country and Central Texas. Scattered rains could reappear by midweek, he said.

Residents in the Onion Creek area of southeastern Travis County, which was ravaged by flooding in October, said that even though the rain seemed strong overnight, there wasn't any damage.

This article includes material from staff writers Nicole Chavez, Ciara O'Rourke, Asher Price, Sarah Coppola, Claire Osborn and Esther Robards-Forbes.

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